

Application No. 09/970,294
Amendment dated October 7, 2004
Reply to Office Action of July 13, 2004

REMARKS

Applicant amended claims 91, 130, 133, 154, 156, 184, 185, and 194 to further define Applicant's invention. Claims 91, 130, 133, 184, and 194 were amended to correct the spelling of "convexedly." Claims 154, 156, and 185 were amended to provide proper antecedent basis.

In the Office Action, the Examiner allowed claims 91-135, 139-153 and 184-202. The Examiner objected to claims 155, 163, 182, and 183 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Examiner rejected claims 154, 156, 157, 159, 161, 162, 164, 168, 170-172, and 179-181 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,045,554 to Grooms et al. ("Grooms") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,088,869 to Greenslade ("Greenslade"); rejected claim 160 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grooms and Greensdale, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,030,162 to Huebner; rejected claim 167 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grooms and Greenslade, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,048,344 to Schenk; rejected claim 169 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grooms alone; rejected claims 173 and 176-178 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grooms and Greenslade, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,048,204 to Klardie et al.; and rejected claims 174 and 175 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,275,601 to Gogolewski et al.

Applicant amended independent claim 154 to include the allowable subject matter of independent claim 91. Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent claim 154 is allowable over the art cited by the Examiner in the Office Action, whether alone or in proper combination. Applicant further submits that the rejections over claims 156, 157, 159-162, 164, and 167-181 are rendered moot at least because they depend from an allowable independent claim, or claims dependent therefrom.

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In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims, as amended, are patentable. Therefore, it is requested that the Examiner reconsider the outstanding rejections in view of the preceding comments. Issuance of a timely Notice of Allowance of the claims is earnestly solicited.

To the extent any extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is required to obtain entry of this reply, such extension is hereby respectfully requested. If there are any fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17 which are not enclosed herewith, including any fees required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1066.

Respectfully submitted,

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